

REMARKS

The above amendments to the above-captioned application along with the following remarks are being submitted as a full and complete response to the Final Official Action dated April 14, 2005 (U.S. Patent Office Paper No. 20050404). In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, the Examiner is respectfully requested to give due reconsideration to this application, to indicate the allowability of the claims, and to pass this case to issue.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1 through 6 and 8 are presently pending in this application. Claim 7 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, the subject matter of Claim 7 being substantially incorporated into Claim 1. Also, Claims 1 and 8 have been amended to correct formal errors and to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject invention. Entry of the amendments to Claims 1 and 8 is respectfully requested.

Additional Amendments:

The Specification has been amended to correct formal errors and to better disclose and describe the features of the present invention. Entry of the amendments to the Specification is respectfully requested.

Formal Objection

Claim 8 was objected to for minor informalities in wording. In response, Claim 8 has been amended and includes amendments addressing these minor informalities. Withdrawal of the objection to Claim 8 is respectfully requested.

Prior Art Rejections

Claims 1, 2, 5, 6 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0202160 to Chimura et al., hereinafter the Chimura '160 Application.

Claims 3 and 4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over the Chimura '160 Application in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,951,136 to Furuhashi et al., hereinafter the Furuhashi '136 patent.

The Final Office Action states that Claim 7 was objected to as being dependent upon

a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including the recitations of the base claim and any intervening claims (U.S. Patent Office Paper No. 20050404, page 6).

In response, Claim 7 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, and the recitations of Claim 7 have been substantially incorporated into independent Claim 1. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 1 and dependent Claims 2 through 6 and 8, which ultimately depend from Claim 1, are in condition for allowance.

Wherefore, in view of the foregoing, withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. §102(e) and 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejections of Claims 1 through 6 and 8 is respectfully requested.

Reconsideration and allowance of Claims 1 through 6 and 8 is respectfully requested.

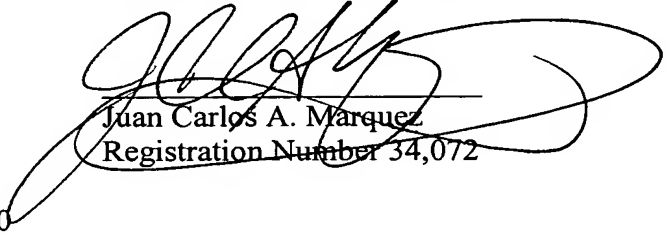
Conclusion

In view of all the above, clear and distinct differences as discussed exist between the present invention as now claimed and the prior art references upon which the rejections in the Office Action rely. Applicants respectfully contend that the prior art references cannot anticipate the present invention or render the present invention obvious. Rather, the present invention as a whole is distinguishable, and thereby allowable over the prior art.

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully solicited. Should there be any outstanding issues requiring discussion that would further the prosecution and allowance of the above-captioned application, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' undersigned representative at the address and phone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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